

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC OPEN SESSION ON THE 7TH DECEMBER 2015 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, WITHYCOMBE at 7pm.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

For future reference Councillors and the Clerk will be referred to in these, and subsequent, reports by their initials:

Emma Wright (Chairman) EW / Chris Thomas (Vice Chairman) CT / Stephen Crossman SC / Tony Connolly TC / Richard Barnham RB / Amanda Gardiner AJG / Susan Gill SMG / Brenda Maitland-Walker (West Somerset District Council) BMW / Christine Lawrence (Somerset County Council) CL / Andy Giles (Clerk) AG.

The meeting was digitally recorded

1. These notes formulate a record of the Public Open Session held on the 7th December 2015.
2. The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. She reported that apologies had been received from the Somerset County Councillor (CL) and the West Somerset District Councillor (BMW). The Chairman asked those members of the public in attendance, if they had any concerns that they wished to bring to the attention of the Parish Council.
3. **Problems Caused by Large Delivery Vehicles**

Withycombe resident, Mrs Helen Hughes raised concerns about an incident that occurred in the village on 11th October 2015, when a large vehicle got stuck outside of her cottage whilst attempting to travel through Withycombe to the A39 from Rodhuish. Mrs Hughes explained the details of the incident and circulated a photograph, taken at the time, showing the proximity of the vehicle to properties adjoining the road. A copy of this photograph and related correspondence are appended to these minutes.

Mrs Hughes advised that she had raised the issue with the Highways Authority with a view to seeking a solution to the increasing number of problems caused by large vehicles passing through the village. Other members of the public who were in attendance shared the concerns expressed by Mrs Hughes and were of the view that some of the vehicles now trying to pass through the village, were too large for the size of the roads and that they represented a danger to adjacent properties.

The matter was debated at some length by all of those present. Mrs Jean Humber advised that the problem had been steadily getting worse over a number of years and that the problem was caused by the ever increasing size of the vehicles making deliveries to local farms and businesses.

Parish Councillors present agreed that in the formal meeting of the Parish Council which followed this Public Open Session, the Clerk would be instructed to contact the Somerset County Council Highways Authority and ask that a representative attend a future meeting of the Parish Council in the hope that a solution might be found to the problem. It was also agreed that the Somerset County Councillor (CL) and the West Somerset District Councillor (BMW) be made aware of the problem and the discussions that had taken place at this meeting. The consensus of the meeting was that all parties would need to work together to find a solution which would allow delivery vehicles to travel through the village in order to service local businesses, whilst at the same time reducing the risks that these vehicles posed to local properties.

4. Parking Opposite the Withycombe Memorial Hall

The Chairman reported that she had been contacted by Roger Hurst, the Active Living Co-ordinator for Withycombe, who had highlighted issues caused by vehicles parked in the area opposite the Withycombe Memorial Hall. Roger had advised that problems had been experienced on Wednesdays which is the day that the Active Living Group meets in the Memorial Hall. Many of those attending the Active Living Group meetings are either elderly or infirm and find it difficult to walk very far, however it is difficult for them to park or to be dropped off near to the Memorial Hall, due to vehicles routinely being parked in the area opposite the Hall.

The Chairman agreed to write to the owners of the vehicles concerned and ask that they leave the area clear on Wednesdays if at all possible.

5. Withycombe Wheels

Mrs Jean Humber addressed the meeting in her capacity as Co-ordinator and Treasurer of Withycombe Wheels and Secretary of the West Somerset Car Scheme Partnership. Jean explained how the Community Car Scheme operated and advised that the proposals from Somerset County Council, currently out for consultation, indicated that there was likely to be a cut in the discount applied to the scheme. Jean explained that any cut in the discount could cause serious problems to many users of the scheme.

Jean asked the Parish Council to press for the continuation of the current funding arrangements for Community Car Schemes and to urge Somerset County Council to look elsewhere for the budget savings that they need to find.

The Chairman advised that this matter was on the agenda of the Parish Council meeting that followed this Public Open Session and that the Parish Council would decide upon the appropriate course of action at that stage.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions before declaring the Public Open Session closed.

The Public Open Session ended at 7.40 pm.

Chairman

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